

**Remarks and an Exchange With
Reporters Prior to a Meeting With
the Congressional Black Caucus**

May 26, 1993

Budget Proposal

The President. Let me say, what I'm trying to do is pass this program in the House. I do one step at a time. I think it's clearly, of all the things that have been presented, the fairest program. It has significant budget cuts, reduces the size of the Federal Government by 150,000, leaves some room for investment, 74 percent of the tax is paid by 6 percent of the people. It's a fair program. It will cost the average person a dollar a month next year, \$7 a month the year after, \$15 a month the year after for a family. And it exempts people of incomes under \$30,000. It is a fair, balanced program. I'm going to try and pass it.

Q. Sir, what are you telling Members of Congress who are worried that they could lose their seats because of some of the tougher elements of this package?

The President. That all the evidence shows that the more people know about the details of the package, the more likely they are to support it. And that if it becomes a rhetorical battle where anyone says that it's tax-and-spend, well, who's for that? Nobody's for that. But the American people are for bringing this deficit down. They are for investing in jobs and technology. They are for a fairer tax system that asks everyone to pay their fair share. And they are for a system that moves people from welfare to work. This program does all those things. It is a very good program. There is no evidence that once people know the facts that they will do that.

Q. What are you going to do to make sure they know the facts? Are you going to go on nationwide radio and TV before the House votes?

The President. I don't know that that is possible or that it will be done before the House votes. But what I have told them is that the day that the people had the most detailed knowledge of this plan was February 17th, because I went through the whole

thing, chapter and verse. So nothing was hidden from the American people. It was all given out.

What has happened since then is—you know, there's a lot of static and back-and-forth. And the President can't go on television every night for that length of time, but that is clear evidence that the more people know about it the more likely they are to support it. Just today I'm going to see some more of the business executives, who will pay more in this plan, who have supported this. Yesterday, Mr. Rostenkowski listed 50 major companies who are supporting the program. We have small business people all over America who are supporting the program, realtors and others, consumer groups. So the people who know more about the program, the more you know about it the more likely you are to be for it.

Q. But isn't energy the hangup? Mr. President, isn't energy the hangup?

The President. It is a big hangup. And we're working——

Senator Boren's Proposal

Q. And how about Boren? Are you going to be able to work with him?

The President. Well, I hope so. We're working through it. I think that it is now apparent to everyone that there are only two plans on the table in the Senate and that ours is far fairer and better for the economy. I mean, the other plan reduces the tax for the oil interest in Oklahoma and elsewhere, but it does it at the expense of putting a \$40 billion burden on Social Security recipients and lower income working people just above the poverty line. It also would shift massive health costs away from the Government on to private employers and employees. I don't think they're for that. So now that we've got an alternative out there, it shows you that our plan is sound and balanced. We're just going to keep working at it.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:52 a.m. in the Old Family Dining Room at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Exchange With Reporters During a Luncheon With Business Leaders

May 26, 1993

White House Travel Office

Q. [*Inaudible*—members of your staff in the Travel Office scandal? Is part of this inquiry going to consider—going to be a chance of shakeups because of the event?

The President. Well, I would like it on the record that one of the things they did was to figure out how to save—how to do the same work with less than half as many people and save you 25 percent on your first flight. I keep hoping I'll read that somewhere in these accounts. I think that ought to be accounted for. I was—the press complained to me repeatedly about being gouged by the White House Travel Office. I kept hearing it everywhere. So we put it out on a competitive bid and saved you 25 percent.

Now, if it wasn't handled right, we'll get to the bottom of it, and we'll straighten that out, and it will be handled right. That's what Mr. McLarty worked on yesterday. And we will do what is appropriate, follow the "do-right rule," and go forward. I don't have anything else to say about it.

Ross Perot

Q. Mr. President, as you meet with these CEO's, your—I put this in quotes—one of your "favorite business guys," Mr. Perot, has been sniping at you again. He told David Frost that you don't have the background or the experience for the most difficult job in the world. How do you deal with this kind of talk from him?

The President. You deal with it. [*Laughter*]

Q. He said you were doing things the Arkansas way.

The President. Well, we know he doesn't like my State. But he spent several million dollars to bad-mouth it last—and it doesn't have much to do with America. We're going to just keep working.

NOTE: The exchange began at 12:25 p.m. in the Old Family Dining Room at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Announcement of White House Fellows

May 26, 1993

The President today appointed 17 men and women from a variety of backgrounds and across the country to be the 1993–94 class of White House fellows.

White House fellows are a select group of men and women who spend a year early in their career serving as paid assistants to the President, Vice President, or Cabinet-level officials. This class will begin their fellowship year in September. They were selected by a commission appointed earlier this month by the President. It was chaired by Nancy Bekavac, the president of Scripps College.

"This is a group of people of exceptional abilities, strong motivation, and a commitment to serve their country," said the President. "I look forward to their service and am confident they will join the successful ranks of such White House fellowship alumni as General Colin Powell and Secretary Henry Cisneros."

The individuals chosen for this year's fellowships are:

Paul T. Anthony, Washington, DC
 Suzanne Rose Becker, Bolton, MA
 Christopher Frank Chyba, Ellicott City, MD
 Jami Floyd, Oakland, CA
 W. Scott Gould, Topsfield, MA
 Kevin Vincent Grimes, Mountain View, CA
 Suzan Denise Johnson Cook, Bronx, NY
 Michael Nathaniel Levy, Washington, DC
 Gaynor McCown, New York, NY
 Barbara Paige, New York, NY
 Raul Perea-Henze, New York, NY
 Leslie Ramirez, Evans, GA
 Maj. David Rhodes, USAF, Glendale, AZ
 Reginald L. Robinson, Lawrence, KS
 Martha E. Stark, Brooklyn, NY
 Todd Ulmer, San Francisco, CA
 Maj. Roderick Von Lipsey, USMC, Philadelphia, PA

NOTE: Biographies of the White House fellows were made available by the Office of the Press Secretary.